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AUTHOR Liebertz, Skip; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the issue of community relations through a presentation given by the four members of the school board and administration of a medium-sized school district in Salem, Oregon. Community relations is defined as two-way communications between a school district and the public. Public feedback is necessary for improvement of school-community relations, and for acquiring community support of tax levies. To meet the goal of improved communications, a comprehensive plan was developed using four steps: (1) analysis of information collected from the community through surveys, the media, and other sources; (2) planning of the target audience, determining the message to be sent to each group, evaluating existing communication programs, and identifying feasible communication methods; (3) execution and communication, including identification of who is responsible for which activity, incorporating communication skills on employee evaluations, encouraging employees to participate in the community, and assuring that employees are well-informed; and (4) evaluation of communication activities, involving degree of success, time effectiveness, number of people reached, response, and developing a new plan based on the results of the evaluation. Successes of this district's program are recounted, and suggestions as to how other districts could develop similar plans are offered. (WTH)

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"SHARE THE SUCCESS"

DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN THAT WORKS

NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

9 A.M., APRIL 6, 1987

SAN FRANCISCO

CIVIC AUDITORIUM, LARKIN ROOM

I. INTRODUCTION -- SKIP LIEBERTZ
Salem-Keizer School District, Salem, Oregon

A. GOOD MORNING AND WELCOME TO THIS SHARE THE SUCCESS SESSION ON "DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION PLAN THAT WORKS."

1. MY NAME IS SKIP LIEBERTZ -- I DIRECT THE OFFICE OF FEDERAL, STATE AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS FOR SALEM-KEIZER SCHOOL DISTRICT

2. WE'RE A MEDIUM-SIZED SCHOOL DISTRICT IN OREGON, AND WE SERVE ABOUT 25,000 YOUNGSTERS IN GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 12

2. I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE MY BOSSES ON THIS PANEL WHO WILL BE PRESENTING OUR COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN TO YOU.

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A. FOLLOWING ME WILL BE PAUL CARR, WHO IS A SALEM DENTIST AND THE CHAIRMAN OF OUR CITIZENS' BUDGET COMMITTEE. HE IS SERVING HIS SECOND TERM ON THE SCHOOL BOARD

B. THEN COMES OUR SUPERINTENDENT, DR. HOMER KEARNS. HOMER HAS BEEN SUPERINTENDENT IN SALEM-KEIZER FOR ABOUT ONE YEAR NOW AND IS AUTHOR OF MANY OF THE COMMUNICATION GAFFES WHICH I'LL SHARE WITH YOU IN A FEW MOMENTS.

C. FINALLY...TO WRAP UP OUR PRESENTATION...IS THE VICE CHAIRPERSON OF OUR SCHOOL BOARD...JOANNE STERN. JOANNE IS ALSO THE PRESIDENT OF THE OREGON SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION AND WILL HANDLE ANY QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE AT THE END OF THIS SESSION.

B. I THINK IT'S SIGNIFICANT THAT THE BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION ARE MAKING THIS PRESENTATION AS A TEAM. COMMUNICATION IN OUR DISTRICT IS A TEAM EFFORT, AND THE SCHOOL BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION ARE BOTH DEEPLY INVOLVED IN CARRYING OUT OUR DISTRICT'S COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN.

C. BEFORE WE BEGIN OUR SESSION ON DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN, LET ME GIVE YOU THE BOTTOM LINE...OR A DEFINITION OF WHAT I BELIEVE COMMUNITY RELATIONS IS

1. COMMUNITY RELATIONS IS PLANNED, TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN A SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE PUBLIC IT SERVES.

2. THE WAY THAT PLANNED, TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION HAPPENS IS THROUGH A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN LIKE THE ONE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT TODAY.

3. I THINK THE CRITICAL QUESTION YOU NEED TO ASK YOURSELF AS A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER IS:

   A. DO WE REALLY NEED A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN OR IS OUR DISTRICT ALREADY DOING THAT JOB OF COMMUNICATION WELL ENOUGH?

   B. ANOTHER WAY TO LOOK AT THAT IS: IS THERE ANY WAY TO IMPROVE OUR COMMUNICATIONS?

4. UNFORTUNATELY...MANY SCHOOL BOARDS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIONS TAKE THIS CRITICAL AREA FOR GRANTED.

THEY ASSUME THAT BECAUSE THEY'RE HONEST PEOPLE, TRYING TO DO A GOOD JOB FOR THE COMMUNITY, THAT THE COMMUNITY WILL SUPPORT THEM AND UNDERSTAND WHY THEY MAKE THE DECISIONS THEY DO. UNFORTUNATELY, IN MOST INSTANCES, THAT'S JUST NOT TRUE.

5. IT'S AMAZING TO ME HOW MANY DIFFERENT WAYS THERE ARE TO GET SIMPLE COMMUNICATION GOOFED UP. A FRIEND OF MINE WORKS IN THE STATE WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND HE COPIED DOWN SOME BRIEF SENTENCES FROM LETTERS HE RECEIVED AS APPLICATIONS FOR SUPPORT PAYMENTS. I'D LIKE TO SHARE A FEW OF THEM WITH YOU.

   A. PLEASE FIND FOR CERTAIN IF MY HUSBAND IS DEAD. THE MAN I AM LIVING WITH CAN'T EAT OR DO ANYTHING UNTIL HE KNOWS.

   B. THIS IS MY EIGHTH CHILD. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

   C. IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR INSTRUCTIONS, I HAVE GIVEN BIRTH TO TWINS IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE.

   D. MY HUSBAND GOT HIS PROJECT CUT OFF TWO WEEKS AGO, AND I HAVEN'T HAD ANY RELIEF SINCE.

E. I WANT MONEY AS QUICK AS I CAN GET IT. I HAVE BEEN IN BED WITH THE DOCTOR FOR TWO WEEKS AND HE DOESN'T DO ME ANY GOOD. IF THINGS DON'T IMPROVE, I WILL HAVE TO FIND ANOTHER DOCTOR.

AS YOU CAN SEE...SIMPLE SENTENCES CAN REALLY GET YOU IN TROUBLE. LET ME GIVE YOU AN INTERESTING EXAMPLE OF POOR COMMUNICATION FROM A SCHOOL DISTRICT. THIS IS IN THE FORM OF A MEMO WHICH GETS PASSED THROUGH THE SCHOOL SYSTEM.

F. FROM SUPERINTENDENT TO ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT: NEXT THURSDAY AT 10:30 A.M. HALLEY'S COMET WILL APPEAR OVER THIS AREA. THIS IS AN EVENT WHICH OCCURS ONLY ONCE EVERY 75 YEARS. CALL THE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND HAVE THEM ASSEMBLE THEIR TEACHERS AND CLASSES ON THE ATHLETIC FIELDS AND EXPLAIN THIS PHENOMENON TO THEM. IF IT RAINS, THEN CANCEL THE DAY'S OBSERVATION AND HAVE THE CLASSES MEET IN THE AUDITORIUM TO SEE A FILM ABOUT THE COMET.

G. FROM ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS: BY ORDER OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, NEXT THURSDAY AT 10:30 HALLEY'S COMET WILL APPEAR OVER YOUR ATHLETIC FIELD. IF IT RAINS, THEN CANCEL THE DAY'S CLASSES AND REPORT TO THE AUDITORIUM WITH YOUR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS WHERE YOU WILL SHOW FILMS, A PHENOMENAL EVENT WHICH OCCURS EVERY 75 YEARS.

H. FROM SCHOOL PRINCIPAL TO TEACHERS: BY ORDER OF THE PHENOMENAL SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS AT 10:30 NEXT THURSDAY HALLEY'S COMET WILL APPEAR IN THE AUDITORIUM. IN CASE OF RAIN OVER THE ATHLETIC FIELD THE SUPERINTENDENT WILL GIVE ANOTHER ORDER; SOMETHING WHICH OCCURS ONLY EVERY 75 YEARS.

I. TEACHERS TO STUDENTS: NEXT THURSDAY AT 10:30 THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS WILL APPEAR IN OUR SCHOOL AUDITORIUM WITH HALLEY'S COMET; SOMETHING WHICH OCCURS EVERY 75 YEARS. IF IT RAINS, THE SUPERINTENDENT WILL CANCEL THE COMET AND ORDER US ALL OUT TO OUR PHENOMENAL ATHLETIC FIELD.

J. STUDENTS TO PARENTS: WHEN IT RAINS NEXT THURSDAY AT 10:30 OVER THE SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELD, THE PHENOMENAL 75 YEAR OLD SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS WILL CANCEL ALL CLASSES AND APPEAR BEFORE THE WHOLE SCHOOL IN THE AUDITORIUM ACCOMPANIED BY BILL HALLEY AND THE COMETS.

THIS PARTICULAR MEMO DIDN'T GO OUT IN OUR DISTRICT, BUT AT SOME POINT, I'D GUESS THAT HOMER WILL GIVE ME ANOTHER EXAMPLE LIKE IT.

3. IN EARLY LAST YEAR I BOARDED A UNITED AIRLINES 727 IN PORTLAND TO FLY TO CHICAGO. AS SOON AS EVERYONE GOT SECURELY BUCKLED IN, WE WERE INFORMED BY THE PILOT THAT WE HAD A MINOR MECHANICAL PROBLEM, AND WE'D BE HELD ON THE GROUND FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. THREE-AND-A-HALF HOURS LATER, WE TOOK OFF. IT WAS AN EXPERIENCE THAT MIGHT INFURIATE ANYBODY. THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE HERE, HOWEVER. EVERY 15 OR 20 MINUTES THE PILOT OR STEWARDESS WOULD COME OVER THE INTERCOM AND EXPLAIN EXACTLY WHAT WAS HAPPENING AND WHAT THEY WERE DOING TO CORRECT THE PROBLEM. THE LAST ANNOUNCEMENT TOLD US OF THE SAFETY CHECKS BEING DONE TO INSURE OUR SAFETY.

WHILE NO ONE WAS PLEASE WITH A FOUR-HOUR DELAY, MOST OF US FELT THAT WE KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON, AND WE SUPPORTED THE DECISION TO STAY SAFE WHOLEHEARTEDLY. AS WE FLEW TO CHICAGO, THE STEWARDESS MADE AN INTERESTING COMMENT TO ME. SHE SAID:

"THE ONE IMPORTANT THING I'VE DISCOVERED OVER THE YEARS IS THAT PEOPLE CAN DEAL WITH THE WORST POSSIBLE NEWS AS LONG AS THEY ARE KEPT INFORMED. PEOPLE CAN DEAL WITH ANYTHING -- EXCEPT LACK OF COMMUNICATION. IN MY JOB...COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS."

D. COMMUNICATION IS NOT ONLY THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY. IT'S THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN ANY BUSINESS...AND THAT INCLUDES THE MOST IMPORTANT BUSINESS OF ALL...THE BUSINESS OF EDUCATING AMERICA'S YOUTH.

1. MORE THAN 300 ANGRY PATRONS OF A NEARBY SCHOOL DISTRICT RECENTLY MET TO TELL THE SUPERINTENDENT AND THE BOARD WHY THEY HAD TURNED DOWN LEVY REQUESTS. THEIR TOP CONCERN -- "LACK OF COMMUNICATION."

2. THE SUPERINTENDENT RESPONDED BY TELLING PATRONS HE WOULD RECOMMEND A COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAM AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING.

   A. "I WILL RECOMMEND THAT ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS WE DO IS CONDUCT A SURVEY OF THE COMMUNITY AND TRY TO GET INPUT."

   B. ONE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER RESPONDED THAT HE THINKS THE DISTRICT WILL BECOME A BETTER SCHOOL DISTRICT BECAUSE OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE LEVY FAILURES.

   C. "I THINK THIS HAS BEEN A HEALTHY PROCESS FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY. THE RESULT IS WE HAVE MORE PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE SCHOOL THAN WE HAVE HAD FOR A LONG TIME," COMMENTED THE BOARD MEMBER.

   D. THE IMPORTANT POINT I WANT TO EMPHASIZE, HOWEVER, IS THAT YOU DON'T NEED TO GET SICK BEFORE YOU START THAT "HEALTHY PROCESS."

E. EVERY SCHOOL ALREADY COMMUNICATES...WHETHER YOU SAY ANYTHING OR NOT.

1. EVERY TIME SECRETARY ANSWERS THE PHONE...YOU COMMUNICATE TO THE PUBLIC

2. EVERY TIME CUSTODIAN TALKS TO HIS NEIGHBOR...

3. EVERY TIME STUDENT TALKS ABOUT HIS OR HER DAY AT SCHOOL...

4. EVERY TIME YOU TALK TO YOUR FRIENDS AT THE HEALTH CLUB...YOU COMMUNICATE

5. SO DO YOUR EMPLOYEES. RESEARCH SHOWS THAT PEOPLE ARE MORE LIKELY TO BELIEVE WHAT THE CLASSIFIED STAFF SAYS ABOUT THE SCHOOLS THAN WHAT THE SUPERINTENDENT OR SCHOOL BOARD MEMEMBERS SAY.

6. SINCE YOU ALREADY COMMUNICATE...WHY NOT PLAN IT?

   A. CHANCES OF ACHIEVING SUCCESS BETTER THAN JUST TRUSTING TO LUCK

   B. OR HOPING MEDIA DOESN'T FIND OUT ABOUT A LOW TEST SCORE

7. MOVE TOWARD ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATION SOMETIMES FRUSTRATES US. WHY?

A. BECAUSE WE KNOW WE'RE DOING A GOOD JOB. SURE WE HAVE A FEW FLAWS...BUT ON THE WHOLE...PUBLIC EDUCATION IS DOING AN OUTSTANDING JOB EDUCATING AMERICA'S STUDENTS.

B. BUT DOES YOUR COMMUNITY KNOW ABOUT IT?
   (1) CAN NEVER ASSUME THAT PUBLIC OPINION IS ON YOUR SIDE.
   (2) IT'S YOUR JOB TO TELL THE PUBLIC...
   (3) JUST WHEN YOU THINK THE MESSAGE IS GETTING BORING...MAY JUST BE GETTING THROUGH TO THE PUBLIC.

F. QUALITY EDUCATION DEPENDS ON A TEAM OF STUDENTS, PARENTS, STAFF, BOARD MEMBERS AND CITIZENS WORKING TOGETHER. TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL:

1. TO BUILD A STRONG TEAM
2. TO HELP PEOPLE UNDERSTAND DISTRICT GOALS
3. TO UNDERSTAND AND CORRECT PROBLEMS
4. TO ACHIEVE COMMUNITY SUPPORT
5. TO UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS, DESIRES AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY
6. TO INCREASE MORALE
7. TO IMPROVE PROGRAMS AND
8. MOST IMPORTANTLY...TO FULFILL THE MISSION OF YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT...TO IMPROVE EDUCATION.

G. NOTICE I SAID "TWO-WAY" COMMUNICATION. TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION MEANS LISTENING AS WELL AS GIVING OUT INFORMATION. WE WORK FOR A CORPORATION THAT IS PUBLICLY OWNED. WE NEED TO LISTEN TO WHAT OUR STOCKHOLDERS ARE TELLING US.

H. WHAT COMMUNICATION CAN'T DO.

1. 90 PERCENT OF GOOD PUBLIC RELATIONS IS WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO.

2. COMMUNICATION CAN'T MAKE THE PUBLIC BELIEVE THAT A BAD SYSTEM IS GOOD. IF YOU'VE GOT A BAD SYSTEM...DON'T DEPEND ON PUBLIC RELATIONS TO SAVE THE DAY. DO THE BEST JOB YOU CAN. TALK TO THE PUBLIC HONESTLY. TELL THEM WHERE YOU HAVE PROBLEMS AND HOW THEY CAN HELP IMPROVE YOUR SYSTEM.

3. PLANNED COMMUNICATIONS CAN HELP YOU AVOID CRISIS. IT AVOIDS A LOT OF PROBLEMS. BUT PLANNED COMMUNICATIONS ALSO HELPS YOU DEAL WITH PROBLEMS WHEN THEY DO COME UP. A GOOD COMMUNICATION PLAN IS PRO-ACTIVE. IT KEEPS YOU FROM SPENDING ALL OF YOUR TIME PUTTING OUT FIRES. HOW MANY TIMES DO YOU SAY, "BUT DON'T THEY KNOW..." OR "THEY OBVIOUSLY DON'T UNDERSTAND..." OR EVEN "WHY DIDN'T I KNOW ABOUT THIS?"

4. JOHN WHERRY OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION ONCE SHARED THE FOUR SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC RELATIONS WITH ME. I'LL PASS THEM ALONG TO YOU BECAUSE THEY WORK.

   A. NUMBER ONE IS...DO A GOOD JOB
   B. NUMBER TWO IS...**DO** A GOOD JOB
   C. NUMBER THREE IS...DO A **GOOD** JOB
   D. AND NUMBER FOUR IS...**TELL** PEOPLE ABOUT IT

5. COMMUNICATIONS CAN HELP YOU DO A GOOD JOB BY PROVIDING THE FEEDBACK YOU NEED TO IMPROVE. IT CAN TELL THE PUBLIC WHAT YOU ARE DOING THAT IS RIGHT. IT CAN HELP YOU GAIN THE SUPPORT YOU NEED TO IMPROVE YOUR PROGRAMS.

I. SALEM-KEIZER SCHOOL DISTRICT IS NOT UNLIKE MANY OTHER DISTRICTS ACROSS THE NATION --

1. ABOUT 72 TO 75 PERCENT OF OUR PATRONS DO NOT HAVE CHILDREN IN SCHOOL.

2. AT THE SAME TIME, SALEM-KEIZER SCHOOL DISTRICT MUST ASK ITS PATRONS EVERY YEAR TO APPROVE A PROPERTY TAX LEVY TO OPERATE SCHOOLS.

3. FREQUENTLY HAS TAKEN TWO TO FOUR ELECTIONS TO GET VOTER APPROVAL OF A PROPERTY TAX LEVY.

   A. A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO WE BECAME NERVOUS WHEN WE REALIZED THE DISTRICT ALSO WOULD BE ASKING VOTERS TO APPROVE:

      (1) $25.1 MILLION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
      (2) $4 MILLION TWO-YEAR SERIAL LEVY TO START A KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM
      (3) IN ADDITION TO OUR ANNUAL LEVY

4. WE KNEW THAT COMMUNICATION WAS THE KEY TO COMMUNITY SUPPORT SO...

5. THE FIRST THING THE SCHOOL BOARD DID WAS TO MAKE COMMUNICATION ONE OF ITS GOALS

   A. OUR GOAL: TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SALEM-KEIZER SCHOOL DISTRICT AND ITS CITIZENS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITHOUT CHILDREN IN THE DISTRICT'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

   B. IN RESPONSE TO THAT GOAL, THE DISTRICT'S COMMUNICATION OFFICE DEVELOPED A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN...AND THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE TO TALK ABOUT TODAY:

II. DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN -- **PAUL CARR**

A. TOO MANY PLANS ARE DEVELOPED IN ISOLATION -- SHOULD REFLECT THE GOALS OF THE DISTRICT. IF YOU DON'T HAVE GOALS, THAT'S THE FIRST PLACE TO START.

1. ESTABLISH MISSION AND GOALS

2. I REMEMBER A STORY ABOUT A KNIGHT -- THE KNIGHT COMES BACK FROM BATTLE DISHEVELED -- FALLING OFF HORSE -- HIS HELMET ALL ASKEW. THE KING ASKED, "WHAT'S HAPPENED, MY FAITHFUL KNIGHT?" THE KNIGHT ANSWERED, "OH, HONORED KING. I HAVE BEEN FIGHTING AND RAPING AND PILLAGING TO DEFEND YOU AGAINST YOUR ENEMIES." "BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY ENEMIES," SAID THE KING. "YOU DO NOW," SAID THE KNIGHT.

   THE POINT IS...THE KING HAD FAILED TO CLEARLY COMMUNICATE HIS MISSION AND GOALS TO THE WELL-MEANING KNIGHT. AS A RESULT...THE KNIGHT'S EFFORTS MADE THINGS WORSE...NOT BETTER.

3. PEOPLE CAN SPEND AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF WELL-MEANING ENERGY WITHOUT IMPROVING THE SITUATION. IF YOU WANT STAFF, PARENTS, STUDENTS AND THE COMMUNITY TO TRAVEL IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION...YOU NEED TO COMMUNICATE YOUR GOALS.

4. DEVELOP A THEME TO REFLECT MISSION AND GOALS

A. SALEM-KEIZER SCHOOL DISTRICT WENT THROUGH A CAREFUL PROCESS TO DEVELOP ITS THEME.

B. WE RECRUITED SOME OF THE MOST CREATIVE PEOPLE IN THE DISTRICT TO A BRAINSTORMING SESSION. INVOLVED ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF, COMMUNITY. CABINET DID A LITTLE REFINING...AND THEN WE FIELD-TESTED IT. "LEARNING FOR A LIFETIME." WE BELIEVE THAT DESCRIBES OUR MOST IMPORTANT TASK IN TODAY'S SOCIETY. TO GIVE STUDENTS SKILLS THEY NEED TO LEARN FOR A LIFETIME AND TO GIVE THEM THE DESIRE TO CONTINUE TO LEARN.

C. IT'S A VERSATILE THEME THAT CAN BE APPLIED TO COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND MUSIC AS WELL AS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND READING AND MATH. WE'RE PROUD OF OUR THEME AND FIND STAFF ARE USING IT IN MANY WAYS. WE INTEND TO KEEP THAT THEME FOR SEVERAL YEARS --SO PEOPLE IDENTIFY DISTRICT WITH IT -- WILL CHANGE AS NEED TO CHANGE MESSAGE.

B. MANY WAYS TO DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION PLAN. EDWARD BERNAYS -- THE FATHER OF MODERN PUBLIC RELATIONS -- HAS AN EIGHT-STEP PLAN FOR "ENGINEERING CONSENT." LARRY ASCOUGH IN DALLAS, TEXAS, LISTS 10 STEPS FOR KEEPING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN ON TARGET.

WE...IN SALEM-KEIZER, OREGON...FOLLOWED THE NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION PROCEDURE THAT LISTS FOUR STEPS TO DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION PLAN. ALTHOUGH WE USED ONLY FOUR STEPS...WE BELIEVE THOSE FOUR STEPS ARE ESSENTIAL TO ANY GOOD PLAN. ANYWAY...FOUR STEPS ARE EASIER TO REMEMBER THAN 10 STEPS AND MAKE FOR A SHORTER SPEECH.

THE FOUR STEPS ARE: ANALYSIS, PLANNING, EXECUTION AND COMMUNICATION, EVALUATION

1. ANALYSIS

a. QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

(1) WHAT DO PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT THE DISTRICT?

(2) HOW DO THEY FEEL ABOUT THE DISTRICT? -- WHAT'S THEIR OPINION ABOUT THE JOB YOU ARE DOING? YOU MAY KNOW YOU ARE DOING A GOOD JOB. BUT DO YOUR PATRONS KNOW THAT?

(3) WHAT DOES THE PUBLIC WANT TO KNOW?

(4) WHAT DO YOU WANT THEM TO KNOW?

(5) WHERE DO THEY GET THEIR INFORMATION?

SIT DOWN WITH A PAD OF PAPER AND A PENCIL AND DO SOME NOODLING ON THOSE QUESTIONS.

B. ANALYSIS IS A TWO-WAY PROCESS

(1) GATHER ALL THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ABOUT YOUR DISTRICT

(A) DEMOGRAPHICS
(B) CLUBS PEOPLE BELONG TO
(C) HOW DO THEY SPEND THEIR LEISURE TIME
(D) WHERE DO THEY SHOP
(E) CENSUS INFORMATION
(F) HOW OLD ARE PEOPLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY
(G) WHAT'S THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE -- WE FOUND THAT MADE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY. PEOPLE ARE MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT LEVIES WHEN THEY ARE WORKING.
(H) WHAT'S THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL
(I) WHAT'S THE AVERAGE INCOME

(J) WHICH RADIO STATIONS ARE LISTENED TO MOST FREQUENTLY

(K) HOW MANY PEOPLE SUBSCRIBE TO YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER

(L) WHAT IS THE DIVORCE RATE?

(M) HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE SINGLE?

YOU ARE DEVELOPING A PICTURE OF YOUR COMMUNITY. AS YOU GATHER INFORMATION THE PICTURE OF YOUR COMMUNITY MAY DIFFER FROM THE PICTURE YOU NOW HAVE.

(2) SURVEY YOUR COMMUNITY

(A) MANY WAYS TO CONDUCT A SURVEY

(B) FIRST YEAR USED VOLUNTEERS TO TELPHONE 289 COMMUNITY MEMBERS

(C) SECOND YEAR USED PROFESSIONAL POLLER -- INFORMATION SURPRISING CLOSE

c. OTHER OCCASIONAL SURVEYS

(1) WE ARE IN A SOCIETY WHERE PEOPLE NO LONGER VOTE...BUT THEY DO FILL OUT QUESTIONNAIRES AND RESPOND TO SURVEYS. THEY STILL WANT PEOPLE IN AUTHORITY TO HEAR THEIR OPINION.

(2) PAT JACKSON...NOTED PR EXPERT ...RECOMMENDS OCCASIONAL "OVERNIGHT SURVEYS." HE THINKS BOARD MEMBERS REACT TOO QUICKLY TO A NEGATIVE EDITORIAL IN THE NEWSPAPER, FOR EXAMPLE. WHEN PEOPLE WE ASSOCIATE WITH IN THE LOCKER ROOM TELL US THEY'VE READ THE EDITORIAL, OR WHEN WE SEE ONE LETTER TO THE EDITOR IN THE NEWSPAPER, WE TEND TO THINK EVERYONE HAS READ THE NEGATIVE EDITORIAL. THAT MAY BE FAR FROM THE TRUTH.

JACKSON RECOMMENDS A SHORT, QUICK TELEPHONE SURVEY. YOU MAY THINK THE EDITORIAL IS THE TALK OF THE TOWN. BUT IN REALITY YOU MAY FIND ONLY A FEW PEOPLE ACTUALLY READ THE EDITORIAL. OR YOU MAY FIND PEOPLE ARE ON YOUR SIDE.

(3) YEAR AFTER YEAR OF LEVY DEFEATS...SALEM-KEIZER CONDUCTED A POLL TO FIND OUT HOW PEOPLE FELT ABOUT THE LEVY. WHAT WE FOUND OUT WAS VERY INTERESTING. WE FOUND OUT PEOPLE WANTED SOMETHING DIFFERENT. THEY WERE TIRED OF ONE-YEAR LEVIES AND GOING TO THE POLLS AND THREATS OF SCHOOL CLOSURE AND ALL THAT STUFF.

THEY WANTED SOMETHING DIFFERENT. THEY WANTED STABILITY. BUT THEY DIDN'T WANT A PERMANENT TAX BASE. AND THEY TOLD US THEY WERE MORE LIKELY TO PASS A THREE-YEAR SERIAL LEVY THAN THEY WERE TO PASS A ONE-YEAR LEVY. SO...WE LISTENED TO THOSE VOTERS...AND WE OFFERED THEM WHAT THEY ASKED FOR...SOMETHING WE HAD NEVER TRIED BEFORE...A THREE-YEAR SERIAL LEVY. AND GUESS WHAT? IT PASSED. IT PAYS TO LISTEN.

YOUR NATIONAL PRESIDENT AND YOUR LEGISLATORS USE SURVEYS TO MAKE DECISIONS. WHY CAN'T YOU? AND IF YOU THINK IT SOUNDS MANIPULATIVE...CONSIDER THAT WHAT YOU ARE ACTUALLY DOING IS LISTENING AND REPONDING TO YOUR VOTERS.

(4) GATHERED INFORMATION IN OTHER WAYS

- (A) "I WANT TO KNOW" CARDS
- (B) HOTLINE
- (C) QUESTIONNAIRES IN PUBLICATIONS
- (D) EVALUATION FORMS
- (E) INFORMAL RAP GROUPS
- (F) FOCUS GROUPS
- (G) MONITORING NEWSPAPER COLUMN INCHES

(5) ANALYZED THE INFORMATION

(A) FOUND PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN EDUCATION HIGHER IN SALEM-KEIZER AREA THAN NATIONALLY --

(B) STRONGEST SUPPORT FROM THOSE WHO KNOW US BEST -- PARENTS

(C) BOTH PARENTS AND NON-PARENTS DESCRIBED LACK OF PROPER FINANCING AS THE DISTRICT'S BIGGEST PROBLEM

(D) A STRONG MAJORITY ASKED THE DISTRICT TO PLACE MORE EMPHASIS ON MATH, READING AND WRITING, COMPUTERS AND DRUG AND ALCOHOL INFORMATION. DOES THAT MEAN THAT WE DON'T PLACE ENOUGH EMPHASIS ON MATH? OR DOES IT SIMPLY MEAN THAT PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT OUR EMPHASIS ON READING? THAT'S WHERE ANALYSIS COMES INTO PLAY.

(E) PARENTS TOLD US THEY WANT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENT PROGRESS.

(F) ANOTHER INTERESTING STATISTIC -- 61 PERCENT FELT SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS ARE "DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION."

BUT ONLY 33 PERCENT FELT "SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS ACTIVELY SOLICIT COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON THEIR DECISIONS." THAT TOLD US WE NEEDED TO DO A BETTER JOB TELLING CITIZENS HOW THEY COULD BECOME INVOLVED IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.

(G) THE COMMUNITY ALSO TOLD US THAT THEY THINK THERE SHOULD BE **MORE** NOT LESS CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOLS. PEOPLE WANT CONTROL OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT.

(H) WE ALSO FOUND THAT STUDENTS ARE STILL OUR BEST SOURCE OF INFORMATION. MORE THAN HALF OF ALL PARENTS GET MOST OF THEIR INFORMATION FROM STUDENTS.

OVER A THIRD LIST NEWSPAPERS AS MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION AND -- VERY INTERESTINGLY -- ABOUT ONE-FIFTH LIST SCHOOL EMPLOYEES AS MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

(1) A STRONG MAJORITY OF PARENTS AND NON-PARENTS SAID THEY READ "REACHING OUT" A NEWSLETTER THAT WE DISTRIBUTE TO ALL RESIDENTS SEVERAL TIMES A YEAR. NOT SURPRISINGLY, WE ALSO FOUND THAT THOSE WHO READ THE DISTRICT'S NEWSLETTER HAD A MORE POSITIVE VIEW OF THE DISTRICT THAN THOSE WHO LISTED ONLY NEWSPAPERS AS THEIR SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

THE GALLUP POLL ON PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN EDUCATION SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 1985. IN THE SECTION DEALING WITH THE PUBLIC'S PERCEPTIONS ABOUT DISCIPLINE, THE REPORT SAYS, "ONE OF THE PERENNIAL PROBLEMS FACING THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS CONCERNS PUBLIC RELATIONS."

GALLUP NOTES THAT "SPOT COVERAGE" BY THE MEDIA IS USUALLY NEGATIVE, ADDING TO THE PERCEPTION THAT DISCIPLINE IS WORSE THAN EVER. PARENTS IN THE GALLUP POLL, HOWEVER, DO NOT SEE DISCIPLINE BEING AS MUCH OF A PROBLEM AS IT USED TO BE.

IT'S A MISTAKE TO DEPEND ON THE MEDIA AS THE ONLY SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DISTRICT. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE DEVELOPED YOUR OWN COMMUNICATION VEHICLES...A STAFF NEWSLETTER... BUILDING-LEVEL NEWSLETTERS TO PARENTS...NEWSLETTERS THAT REACH THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY ...COFFEES ...OPEN HOUSES AND OTHER COMMUNICATION VEHICLES.

(J) AS YOU CAN SEE...THAT SURVEY RESULTED IN A LOT OF INTERESTING INFORMATION. WE SAT DOWN AND ANALYZED IT TO SEE WHAT IT MEANT AND THEN...ARMED WITH OUR GOALS...CENSUS DATA...AND OTHER INFORMATION...WE THEN PLANNED WHAT WE WANTED TO DO.

2. PLANNING -- **HOMER KEARNS**

A. KEEPING THE RESEARCH IN MIND...WE MADE A LIST OF TARGET AUDIENCES.

(1) THIS LIST WILL DIFFER ACCORDING TO YOUR COMMUNITY

(2) BUT ALL LISTS SHOULD START WITH THREE AUDIENCES

(A) STUDENTS
(B) PARENTS
(C) EMPLOYEES
(D) WHY?
(E) SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSES PUT THEIR CUSTOMERS FIRST -- AND STUDENTS AND PARENTS ARE YOUR PRIMARY CUSTOMERS.
(F) THEY ALSO REALIZE THAT IF YOU WANT A GOOD PRODUCT...YOU NEED EMPLOYEES WHO ARE MOTIVATED TO PRODUCE A GOOD PRODUCT. EMPLOYEES MUST KNOW YOUR MISSION AND GOALS AND WHAT YOU EXPECT THEM TO ACCOMPLISH.

(3) OUR LIST ALSO INCLUDED

(A) GOVERNMENT WORKERS -- BECAUSE STATE GOVERNMENT IS THE MAJOR EMPLOYER IN SALEM WITH MORE THAN 12,000 EMPLOYEES

(B) NEW RESIDENTS -- THEY WERE THE LEAST POSITIVE AND THE MOST NEGATIVE IN OUR SURVEY -- THEY ALSO KNEW THE LEAST ABOUT THE DISTRICT

(C) REALTORS -- BECAUSE THEY OFTEN GIVE THE FIRST IMPRESSION ABOUT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

(D) BUSINESSES

(E) SENIOR CITIZENS -- DEMOGRAPHICS SHOW THIS SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION IS INCREASING FASTER THAN ANY OTHER

(F) MINORITIES -- PERCENTAGE INCREASING THROUGHOUT THE NATION

(G) MEDIA -- THE MEDIA HAS POWER AND IT'S WELL TO RECOGNIZE IT

(H) SERVICE AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

(I) SINGLES AND YOUNG MARRIEDS -- YOUNG PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE CHILDREN IN SCHOOL -- MANY PEOPLE OPTING NOT TO HAVE CHILDREN

(J) POLITICAL LEADERS -- THEY MAKE THE LAWS THAT AFFECT YOU

(K) CHURCHES

(L) UNEMPLOYED

(4) IF YOU LIVE IN A FARMING COMMUNITY...YOUR LIST MIGHT INCLUDE FARMERS. IF YOU LIVE IN A FISHING COMMUNITY, YOUR LIST MIGHT INCLUDE THOSE WHO FISH. IF YOU LIVE IN A MANUFACTURING COMMUNITY, YOUR PLAN MIGHT INCLUDE FACTORY WORKERS. IF YOU LIVE IN SALT LAKE CITY...A CITY WITH A HIGH BIRTH RATE...YOUR AUDIENCE MIGHT INCLUDE YOUNG MOTHERS OR MATERNITY HOSPITALS.

(5) WE THEN DETERMINED THE MESSAGE WE WANTED TO GIVE TO EACH OF THESE TARGETED GROUPS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE MESSAGE WE WANTED TO GIVE TO BUSINESSES WAS "EDUCATION IS A SOUND INVESTMENT IN THE COMMUNITY. BUSINESSES AND STUDENTS BOTH GAIN THROUGH BUSINESS-EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS." IN LATER VERSIONS OF THE PLAN, MESSAGES BECAME GOALS: FOR EXAMPLE, OUR COMMUNICATION GOAL FOR EMPLOYEES WAS "TO MOTIVATE ALL EMPLOYEES THROUGH PLANNED SYSTEMATIC, TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION TO REACH THEIR HIGHEST POTENTIAL." AND ALSO "TO MOTIVATE ALL EMPLOYEES TO WORK AS A TEAM TO ACHIEVE THE DISTRICT'S MISSION AND GOALS."

(6) WE THEN INCLUDED INFORMATION ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE COMMUNICATION WITH A PARTICULAR GROUP. DID WE ALREADY HAVE PROGRAMS IN PLACE TO REACH THE TARGETED AUDIENCE?

(7) THE LAST PART OF THE PLAN WAS TO IDENTIFY FEASIBLE WAYS TO COMMUNICATE WITH A TARGETED AUDIENCE.

WHEN MANY PEOPLE THINK OF COMMUNICATION, THEY TEND TO THINK ONLY OF NEWS RELEASES OR PUBLICATIONS. PUBLICATIONS ARE THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE WAY OF BRINGING INFORMATION TO A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE. BUT THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO CHANGE ATTITUDES IS THROUGH FIRST-HAND OBSERVATION AND PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE INVOLVEMENT.

SO WE INCLUDED ACTIVITIES SUCH AS OUR "SEE FOR YOURSELF" TOURS TO BRING PEOPLE TO THE SCHOOLS TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES THE WONDERFUL THINGS THAT ARE HAPPENING IN EDUCATION.

BUT USING THE IF-YOU-CAN'T-BRING-THE-HORSE-TO-WATER THEORY...WE ALSO INCLUDED ACTIVITES TO BRING THE SCHOOLS TO THE PEOPLE SUCH AS A "TEACHERS FAIR" WHERE TEACHERS ACTUALLY DEMONSTRATED CLASS LESSONS ON A STAGE IN A SHOPPING MALL. WE ALSO STARTED A SUCCESSFUL SPEAKERS BUREAU.

(8) ACTIVITES DON'T NEED TO BE EXPENSIVE. SOME EXAMPLES.

(A) TOAST TOPICS -- RANDOMLY SELECT ABOUT A DOZEN EMPLOYEES TO MEET FOR BREAKFAST ON THURSDAY MORNING WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT OR A MEMBER OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S CABINET. GIVES EMPLOYEES A CHANCE TO DISCUSS CONCERNS EYE-BALL TO EYE-BALL AND TO SEE THAT ADMINISTRATORS ARE HUMAN-BEINGS, TOO. "TOAST TOPICS" IS VERY POPULAR AND RECEIVES HIGH RATINGS FROM EMPLOYEES.

(B) SPEAKERS' BUREAU -- SENT OUT BROCHURE AND LETTER TO CLUBS, STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCY HEADS. INCLUDES SUGGESTED TOPICS. SPEAKERS HAVE INCLUDED ADMINISTRATORS, BOARD MEMBERS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS...HAVE REACHED THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE. WE FOUND THAT ALL KINDS OF GROUPS WANT TO HEAR ABOUT EDUCATIONAL ISSUES. SPOKE TO EVERY CONCEIVABLE GROUP -- FROM THE KIWANIS TO AN ORGANIZATION OF CREDIT MANAGERS. SUBJECTS RANGED FROM "HOW TO PREVENT DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE" TO "HOW WE PREPARE KIDS FOR PACIFIC RIM TRADE."

(C) "SEE FOR YOURSELF" TOURS -- LED BY SUPERINTENDENT -- PEOPLE SIGN UP FOR TOURS ACTUALLY HAVE A CHANCE TO SIT IN A CLASSROOM AND OBSERVE TEACHING IN ACTION

(D) GOING THE DISTANCE AWARDS -- TO RECOGNIZE STAFF FOR THE "LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE THE BIG DIFFERENCE"

(E) TEACHERS' FAIR -- IN A SHOPPING MALL

(F) NEWS TIPS -- WEEKLY SHEET OF IDEAS FOR NEWS STORIES

(G) WORKSHOP FOR REALTORS WITH PACKETS OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISTRICT

(H) BILLBOARDS -- SPONSORED BY AREA BUSINESSES WITH DISTRICT THEME

(I) GOLDEN AGE CARDS -- REDUCED RATES FOR SENIORS TO SCHOOL EVENTS

(J) SLIDE-TAPE SHOW -- IN A CARAMATE -- CAN BE PLACED ON A TABLE AND VIEWED

(K) EXHIBITS AND DISPLAYS -- STUDENTS BUILT DISPLAY CASE USED FOR ROTATING DISPLAY IN BANK -- FIRST CITIZEN BANQUETS, TRADE SHOWS, WINDOW DISPLAYS.

(L) COMMUNITY RESOURCE BANK

(M) BROWN-BAG WORKSHOPS

(N) BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

(O) RECRUITING MATHEMATICIANS AND SCIENTISTS

(P) PACKETS OF INFORMATION TO NEW RESIDENTS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR

(Q) BROWN-BAG LUNCHES IN STATE GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

3. EXECUTION AND COMMUNICATION

A. THE NEXT STEP WAS TO DEVELOP A WORK PLAN THAT SPECIFIED WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR WHICH ACTIVITY...AND WHEN IT WOULD BE COMPLETED.

B. INCLUDE COMMUNICATION SKILLS AS A REQUIREMENT ON ADMINISTRATIVE JOB DESCRIPTIONS.

C. INCLUDE COMMUNICATION SKILLS ON EMPLOYEE EVALUATION FORMS. IMPORTANT TO REALIZE COMMUNICATION NOT THE JOB OF JUST ONE PR PERSON OR STAFF MEMBER. COMMUNICATION IS EVERYONE'S JOB. SURVEYS SHOW MOST CREDIBLE PERSON IN DISTRICT IS CUSTODIAN...THEN BUS DRIVER...THEN SECRETARY. AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LIST IS SUPERINTENDENT AND SCHOOL BOARD.

D. ENCOURAGE EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COMMUNITY...TO JOIN ORGANIZATIONS.

E. MAKE SURE EMPLOYEES ARE WELL-INFORMED AND KNOW THE GOOD THINGS ABOUT YOUR DISTRICT. PEOPLE MORE LIKELY TO BELIEVE EMPLOYEE WHAT EMPLOYEE SAYS ABOUT THE DISTRICT THAN ANY PUBLICATION.

F. PLAN WAS AMBITIOUS AND DIDN'T COMPLETE ALL ACTIVITIES -- BUT DID COMPLETE MOST OF THEM.

4. EVALUATION

A. THE FINAL STEP -- AND THE ONE MOST FREQUENTLY LEFT OUT IS EVALUATION. WERE THE COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES SUCCESSFUL? WERE THEY WORTH THE TIME AND EFFORT? HOW MANY PEOPLE DID YOU REACH? WHAT WAS THEIR RESPONSE? IS THE ACTIVITY WORTH CONTINUING OR SHOULD YOU DROP IT AND TRY ANOTHER WAY NEXT YEAR. JUST BECAUSE YOU DID IT THIS YEAR DOESN'T MEAN YOU NEED TO DO IT AGAIN NEXT YEAR.

B. FOR EXAMPLE, FEW PEOPLE ATTENDED THE BROWN-BAG LUNCHES WE HAD AT GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS. WE DROPPED THOSE AND FOCUSED ON DEVELOPING BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS WITH STATE AGENCIES.

C. WE THEN BASED THE FOLLOWING YEAR'S PLAN ON THE RESULTS OF THIS EVALUATION.

III. RESULTS: THE INCREASED EFFORTS PAID OFF -- **JOANNE STERN**

(1) A FOLLOW-UP SURVEY SHOWED AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF RESIDENTS GIVING SALEM-KEIZER PUBLIC SCHOOLS AN "A" RATING.

(2) MORE THAN 12,000 PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED MORE THAN 125,000 HOURS IN SALEM-KEIZER SCHOOL DISTRICT.

(3) DISTRICT ESTABLISHED 51 BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS. THE WHITE HOUSE RECOGNIZED THE DISTRICT'S BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP IN EDUCATION PROGRAM AS ONE OF THE TOP 20 PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS IN THE NATION.

(4) CLOSE TO 200 CITIZENS SPENT A HALF DAY VISITING SCHOOLS THROUGH "SEE FOR YOURSELF" TOURS HOSTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT DURING 1983-85.

(5) CITIZENS WROTE LETTERS TO THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER DESCRIBING THEIR CHANGE IN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SCHOOLS AS A RESULT OF "SEE FOR YOURSELF" TOUR

(6) NUMBER OF POSITIVE NEWSPAPER INCHES ABOUT THE DISTRICT DOUBLED

(7) THE COMMUNITY DEMONSTRATED ITS INCREASED SUPPORT AT THE POLLS BETWEEN 1984 AND 1986 BY APPROVING FUNDING FOR A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN, A KINDERGARTEN LEVY AND A THREE-YEAR SERIAL LEVY.

CITIZEN SUPPORT AT THE BALLOT BOX DEPENDS ON QUALITY EDUCATION AND SYSTEMATIC EFFORTS TO COMMUNICATE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR -- NOT JUST AT ELECTION TIME.

(8) IN 1985, SALEM-KEIZER PUBLIC SCHOOLS WAS ONE OF ONLY 14 DISTRICTS IN THE NATION TO RECEIVE THE GOLD MEDALLION AWARD FROM THE NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION. THE AWARD WAS PRESENTED TO THE DISTRICT FOR ITS COMPREHENSIVE EFFORTS TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE PUBLIC.

IV. COMPREHENSIVE

A. ONE OF THE REASONS SALEM-KEIZER SCHOOL DISTRICT RECEIVED THE GOLD MEDALLION WAS BECAUSE IT WAS COMPREHENSIVE. FOR EXAMPLE, SALEM-KEIZER PUBLIC SCHOOLS INCLUDES:

1. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

   a. MORE THAN 12,000 VOLUNTEERS
   b. VOLUNTEER SERVICE CENTER WITH LEARNING AIDES THAT SENIOR CITIZENS HELP TO CREATE
   c. TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS

2. BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP IN EDUCATION PROGRAM

   a. BUSINESSES AND SCHOOLS SHARE RESOURCES
   b. ADOPT A SCHOOL PROGRAM
   c. INVOLVES BUSINESSES AND STATE AGENCIES
   d. WELLNESS IN THE WORKSITE PROGRAM

3. NEW PROGRAM -- RECRUITING COMMUNITY MATHEMATICIANS AND SCIENTISTS TO VOLUNTEER IN THE SCHOOLS

4. CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT
   - A. LOCAL SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEES
   - B. OCCUPATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES
   - C. AT-RISK, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL AND OTHER CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT
   - D. BLOCK HOME PROGRAM

5. COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM
   - A. OPENS UP ALL SCHOOLS TO THE COMMUNITY
   - B. COMMUNITY RESOURCE BANK -- BRINGS COMMUNITY RESOURCES INTO THE CLASSROOM

6. STAFF DEVELOPMENT
   - A. EMPLOYEES DETERMINE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SALEM-KEIZER SCHOOL DISTRICT
   - B. EMPLOYEES ALSO ARE A MAJOR SOURCE OF INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC
   - C. LESSONS FROM AMERICA'S BEST RUN COMPANIES SHOW EXCELLENT COMPANIES FOCUS ON EMPLOYEES.

V. HOW YOU CAN DEVELOP YOUR OWN PLAN

A. OVERWHELMED? DON'T FEEL NEED TO DO EVERYTHING.

1. BETTER START OUT SMALL - DO A FEW THINGS WELL.

2. DOESN'T NEED TO COST ENORMOUS AMOUNTS OF MONEY BUT NEEDS SOMEONE WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DOING THE JOB

3. INVOLVE PEOPLE -- GET VOLUNTEERS TO HELP YOU.

4. PLAN DOESN'T NEED TO BE FANCY DOCUMENT -- BUT SHOULD BE IN WRITING.

5. DEVELOP A BOARD POLICY ON COMMUNICATION SO COMMUNICATION BECOMES AN INTEGRAL PART OF YOUR PROGRAM AND NOT JUST A ONE-YEAR "GAVE-IT-A-GOOD TRY" SHOT.

6. INCLUDE COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND EVALUATION FORMS.

B. SUMMARIZE STEPS

1. GATHER ALL THE INFORMATION YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR DISTRICT

2. SURVEY AND ANALYZE
   - A. DOOR-TO-DOOR
   - B. BY PHONE WITH VOLUNTEERS
   - C. QUESTIONNAIRES MAILED TO HOMES
   - D. QUESTIONNAIRES IN PUBLICATIONS
   - E. I WANT TO KNOW CARDS
   - F. EVALUATION FORMS
   - G. INFORMAL TALK GROUPS
   - H. FORUMS
   - I. FOCUS GROUPS
   - J. WHAT DO PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOUR SCHOOLS?
   - K. WHAT DO YOU WANT THEM TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR SCHOOLS?

3. PLAN

   A. MAKE A LIST OF THE GROUPS YOU ARE TRYING TO REACH. MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE
      - (1) STUDENTS
      - (2) STAFF
      - (3) PARENTS
      - (4) GROUPS SPECIFIC TO **YOUR** COMMUNITY

B. BRAINSTORM WAYS TO REACH THEM
   (1) INCLUDE WAYS TO BRING PEOPLE INTO YOUR SCHOOLS
   (2) INCLUDE WAYS TO BRING SCHOOLS TO THE PEOPLE
   (3) PEOPLE NEED TO HEAR MESSAGE ABOUT SEVEN TIMES BEFORE THEY WILL TAKE ACTION

4. EXECUTE AND COMMUNICATE
   A. ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITY
   B. ASSIGN A REASONABLE TIMELINE
   C. INVOLVE AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE IN AS MANY WAYS AS YOU CAN THINK OF
   D. INCLUDE COMMUNICATION SKILLS AS PART OF JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS
   E. INCLUDE COMMUNICATION SKILLS ON EVALUATION FORMS OF EMPLOYEES

5. EVALUATE
   A. DO A FOLLOW-UP SURVEY
   B. FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRES
   C. EVALUATION FORMS
   D. FOCUS GROUPS
   E. RAP GROUPS
   F. MONITOR MEDIA COVERAGE

C. HANDOUTS AT THE BACK TABLE

1. INCLUDE A FEW PAGES FROM OUR COMMUNICATION PLAN
2. SUMMARY OF MAIN IDEAS PRESENTED HERE
3. EVALUATION FORMS TO LET US KNOW HOW WELL WE ARE COMMUNICATING WITH YOU

D. COMMUNICATION FOR EVERYONE

1. NOT JUST LARGE DISTRICTS
2. NOT JUST DISTRICTS IN TROUBLE
3. INNER-CITY, SUBURBAN AND RURAL
4. THOSE DOING WELL AND THOSE NOT DOING WELL

E. WILL MAKE YOUR DISTRICT A BETTER PLACE FOR KIDS -- AND THAT'S WHAT WE'RE ALL ABOUT

1. REMEMBER WHAT AIRLINE ATTENDANT SAID, "PEOPLE CAN HANDLE ANYTHING EXCEPT LACK OF COMMUNICATION."

2. COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS...A WAY FOR YOU TO IMPROVE EDUCATION IN YOUR DISTRICT AND A WAY TO GAIN COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR MISSION AND GOALS.

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